GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1973
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2017
Checks on e-Commerce Firms
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Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are instances of online market places window-dressing the discounts they offer by quoting product prices that are higher than MRP and if so, the details thereof;
(b) whether the Government plans to make it mandatory for e-commerce firms to put product pictures on the site in such a manner that the printed MRP is visible and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
(c) whether the consumer rights and protection in respect of the e-commerce is not effectively dealt with in the Consumer Protection Act, if so, the details in this regard along with the measures taken by the Government to protect the rights of the e-commerce consumers;
(d) the manner in which the Government is planning to address issues such as the place of business, jurisdictional issues, non-availability of common dispute resolution system etc. relating to e-commerce;
(e) whether the Government is aware that the Consumers are cheated by unfair practices from Ponzy companies in the country, if so, the number of such incidents reported during the last three years in the country, State and year-wise; and
(f) whether the Government proposes to take effective measures to address the issues concerning all forms of trade practices like e-commerce, Multi-land marketing and Ponzy schemes and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY)

(a) : No such complaint concerning online market places has been received by the Ministry, regarding the discounts offered after quoting product prices higher than MRP.

(b) : Draft amendments to the Packaged Commodities Rules, 2011 contain a proposal that the mandatory labelling declarations on packages mandated as per the rules, including MRP, shall also be displayed on the e-commerce platforms.

(c) & (d) : The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 has been enacted to better protect the interests of the consumers. The provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 cover all goods and services and all modes of transaction including e-commerce. A consumer can file a complaint relating to e-commerce transactions in the appropriate Consumer Forum established under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act.

(e) : A total of 2,80,032 complaints were received by the National Consumer Helpline, out of which 42,559 pertain to e-commerce. No separate details of Ponzi Scheme related complaints are available with the Ministry.

(f) : The Consumer Protection Bill, 2015, already introduced in Parliament, seeks to provide for establishment of a Central Consumer Protection Authority to look into, inter alia, unfair trade practices and take remedial action.
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